

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-52 (Canceled).

53. Canceled.

54. (Currently Amended) A mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:

..... a frame including a central portion, a first side portion provided to a first lateral side of the central portion, and a second side portion provided to a second lateral side of the central portion;

..... a sealing member provided to the central portion of the frame and adapted to form a seal with the patient's nose in use;

..... first and second inlet conduits, each inlet conduit having a first end and a second end;

..... first and second angled connectors, the first angled connector provided between the first end of the first inlet conduit and the first side portion of the frame, and the second angled connector provided between the first end of the second inlet conduit and the second side portion of the frame;

..... a generally Y-shaped connector that interconnects the inlet conduits with a supply of breathable gas, the Y-shaped connector including a first connector portion to engage the

second end of the first inlet conduit and a second connector portion to engage the second end of the second inlet conduit, the first connector portion being angled with respect to the second connector portion; and

a headgear assembly to support the frame and the sealing member in a desired position on the patient's face, the headgear assembly including a pair of straps and a rear portion
The mask assembly according to claim 53, wherein the sealing member is removably coupled to the central portion of the frame.

55. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 54, wherein the frame and the sealing member form at least a portion of a sub-assembly that is angularly adjustable relative to the headgear assembly.

56. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 55, further comprising a plurality of visual indicators which can be selectively matched with a reference indicator provided adjacent the visual indicators to indicate a degree of angular adjustment.

57. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 56, wherein the plurality of visual indicators includes a plurality of spaced apart arrows and the reference indicator includes an arrow.

58. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 57, wherein the rear portion includes an upper strap portion and a lower strap portion that cooperate to define an opening through which an occiput region of the patient's head at least partially protrudes in use.

59. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 58, wherein the straps extend superior to the patient's ears in use.

60. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 59, wherein the central portion of the frame includes a central opening that accommodates the sealing member.

61. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 60, wherein the frame includes openings for CO₂ washout.

62. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 61, wherein the sealing member includes a nasal cushion.

63. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 62, further comprising a headgear connector to interconnect the frame with the headgear assembly.

64. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 63, wherein the frame and the sealing member are angularly adjustable relative to the headgear connector.

65. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 64, further comprising an indexing section structured to allow selective ratcheting adjustment of the frame and the sealing member relative to the headgear assembly while remaining locked in an adjusted position during use.

66. (Currently Amended) A mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:

_____ a frame including a substantially rigid central portion, a first side portion provided to a first lateral side of the central portion, and a second side portion provided to a second lateral side of the central portion;

_____ a sealing member provided to the central portion of the frame and adapted to form a seal with the patient's nose in use;

_____ first and second inlet conduits, each inlet conduit having a first end and a second end;

_____ first and second angled connectors, the first angled connector provided between the first end of the first inlet conduit and the first side portion of the frame, and the second angled connector provided between the first end of the second inlet conduit and the second side portion of the frame;

_____ a generally Y-shaped connector that interconnects the inlet conduits with a supply of breathable gas, the Y-shaped connector including a first connector portion to engage the second end of the first inlet conduit and a second connector portion to engage the second end of the second inlet conduit, the first connector portion being angled with respect to the second connector portion;

_____ a headgear assembly to support the frame and the sealing member in a desired position on the patient's face, the headgear assembly including a pair of straps and a rear portion;
and

~~The mask assembly according to claim 53, further comprising~~ slotted connectors provided to the frame, wherein each of the straps includes an end that is structured to be threaded through a respective slotted connector.

67. (Previously Presented) A mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:

a main conduit portion including a central portion, a first side portion provided to a first lateral side of the central portion, and a second side portion provided to a second lateral side of the central portion, the first side portion defining a first inlet opening and the second side portion defining a second inlet opening;

a sealing member provided to the central portion of the main conduit portion and adapted to form a seal with the patient's nose in use;

a gas washout vent provided to the central portion of the main conduit portion, opposite to the sealing member, the gas washout vent including a plurality of openings for gas washout;

first and second inlet conduits, each inlet conduit having a first end and a second end;

first and second connectors, the first connector provided between the first end of the first inlet conduit and the first inlet opening of the first side portion, and the second connector provided between the first end of the second inlet conduit and the second inlet opening of the second side portion;

a generally Y-shaped connector to interconnect the inlet conduits with a supply of breathable gas, the Y-shaped connector including a first connector portion to engage the second

end of the first inlet conduit and a second connector portion to engage the second end of the second inlet conduit, the first connector portion being angled with respect to the second connector portion;

an elongated member having a central portion that supports the main conduit portion and first and second side portions supporting slotted headgear connectors, the central portion including a pair of openings adapted to retain and locate the main conduit portion; and

a headgear assembly including headgear straps that are structured to be threaded through respective slotted headgear connectors.

68. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 67, wherein the first and second side portions of the elongated member are partially deformable so that the first and second side portions are flexible and bendable to conform with the patient's face.

69. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 68, wherein the elongated member is constructed of polymeric material.

70. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 69, wherein the elongated member is constructed of polypropylene.

71. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 70, wherein the sealing member includes a nasal cushion.

72. (Previously Presented) The mask assembly according to claim 71, further comprising an indexing section structured to allow selective ratcheting adjustment of the main conduit portion relative to the headgear assembly while remaining locked in an adjusted position during use.

73. (Previously Presented) A mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:

- a frame including a central portion and first connector portions provided to lateral sides of the central portion;

- a nasal cushion provided to the central portion of the frame and adapted to form a seal with the patient's nose in use;

- second connector portions coupled to respective first connector portions; and

- a headgear assembly provided to the second connector portions and adapted to support the frame and the nasal cushion in a desired position on the patient's face, the headgear assembly including headgear straps each including an end that is structured to be threaded through a respective slotted connector supported by the second connector portions, wherein:

- the frame and the nasal cushion form at least a portion of a sub-assembly that is angularly adjustable relative to the second connector portions and the headgear assembly,

- a plurality of visual indicators are provided which can be selectively matched with a reference indicator provided adjacent the visual indicators to indicate a degree of angular adjustment, and

an indexing section structured to allow selective ratcheting adjustment of the first connector portions with respect to the second connector portions while remaining locked in an adjusted position during use.

Claims 74-84. Canceled.

85. (New) A mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:

- a main conduit portion including a central portion, a first side inlet opening and a side second inlet opening;
- a nozzle assembly provided to the central portion of the main conduit portion, said nozzle assembly including a pair of nozzles adapted to form a seal with the patient's nares in use;
- a gas washout vent provided to the central portion of the main conduit portion, substantially opposite to the nozzles, the gas washout vent including a plurality of openings for gas washout;
- first and second connectors engaged with the first and second inlet openings, respectively,
- first and second inlet conduits in fluid communication with the main conduit portion via first and second connectors;
- a generally Y-shaped connector having a first end adapted to receive a supply of breathable gas and a second end including a first portion engaged with first inlet conduit and a second portion engaged with second inlet conduit, the first and second portions being angled relative to one another to form the upper part of the "Y" shape;

a headgear assembly to support the nozzle assembly in a desired position of the patient's face in use, the headgear assembly including two generally Y-shaped straps made of a soft, flexible material, each of said Y-shaped straps defining a side strap configured to extend between the eye and ear and along the cheek of the patient in use, an upper strap configured to pass over the top of the patient's head in use and rear strap configured to pass around the rear portion of the patient's head in use; and

a stiffener provided along at least a portion of the length of each said side strap, each said stiffener having an end portion including a ring-shaped retainer or circular fitting integrally formed therewith, each of the first and second connectors being engaged with a respective first or second side inlet opening of the main conduit portion and being oriented and arranged such that the ring-shaped retainer surrounds a portion of the respective first or second connector in a connected position.

86. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein each nozzle includes a hollow, generally cone-shaped portion coupled to a base portion via a hollow stem portion of reduced cross-section.

87. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 86, wherein each nozzle has a distal opening with a generally oval shape having a major diameter and a minor diameter.

88. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the nozzles are removably mounted to a base portion of the nozzle assembly.

89. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the nozzles are constructed of flexible material.

90. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 89, wherein the flexible material includes a silicone elastomer.

91. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the nozzle assembly includes a base portion that is notched to avoid contact with the patient's septum.

92. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the main conduit portion is rotatable to allow an infinite amount of settings for alignment of the nozzles with respect to the nasal passages of the patient.

93. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the upper straps have length-adjustable ends coupled to one another via a top buckle, and the rear straps have length-adjustable ends coupled to one another via a rear buckle.

94. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 93, wherein the upper and rear straps include hook and loop fasteners.

95. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein a width of each stiffener is less than a width of each side strap.

96. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the retainer ring is formed in a plane that is generally orthogonal to a longitudinal plane of the stiffener, with the stiffener being positioned along only a limited circumference of the retainer ring.

97. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein each retainer ring, side inlet opening and connector share a common longitudinal axis in the coupled position.

98. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the stiffener is made of a plastic material.

99. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein each of the first and second connectors is in the form of an elbow.

100. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the stiffener retains at least a partial portion of the basic shape of the headgear assembly.

101. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein each respective side strap, upper strap and rear strap is formed in a one piece structure.

102. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 85, wherein the first and second inlet conduits may be selectively routed in either first or second positions relative to the patient.

103. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 102, wherein, in the first position, the first and second inlet tubes are routed to extend upwardly over the head of the patient in use.

104. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 102, wherein, in the second position, the first and second inlet tubes are routed downwardly under the chin of the patient in use.

105. (New) The mask assembly according to claim 104, further comprising hook and loop fasteners to fasten the respective first and second inlet tubes to the respective Y-shaped straps.